

## **EXPLAINING THE CHILD SECURITY INDEX (CSI)**

### **WHAT IS THE CSI?**

The CSI is a simple diagnostic tool that spatially maps and graphically visualizes how young children experience violence in poor neighborhoods. At its center is of a basket of carefully selected indicators that track psychological, emotional and physical impacts of insecurity on children. These indicators translate into 30 (or so) simple perception-based statements that respondents can agree or disagree with on a 3-point scale, yielding an individual 'CSI score'. The CSI app is a digital survey that is administered on a mobile digital device. It is most powerful when combined with other forms of (administrative and qualitative) data collection<sup>1</sup>.

### **WHAT IS THE CSI ABOUT?**

The CSI is about how everyday insecurity impacts on children's everyday lives, and how this varies over time and space. Indicators can be grouped by themes (e.g. neighbourhood, home, school, safe places, safe people, mobility, lifeskills, wellbeing, and resilience) and disaggregated by selected variables (e.g. age, sex, and setting). Additional background indicators (e.g. relationship to young children, living arrangements, socio-economic status etc) or themes (e.g. violence exposure, mental health, parenting, role models, financial impacts) may be added when necessary, and in accordance with ethical standards. Geographical coordinates are collected.

### **WHO IS THE CSI FOR?**

The CSI is intended for organizations and individuals interested in understanding and responding to violence against children in poor and under-serviced areas. It is specifically intended to be used in order to generate data on the experiences of children under 12 years in fragile settings. Respondents include children themselves (8-12 years) and older proxy informants: adolescents (13-17 years), adult caregivers, and educators. Children under 8 years are excluded for ethical reasons. However, older age groups will be asked questions about the impacts of violence the under 8s.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, we recommend the "flower of peace" for young children, a protection tool that allows children to finish on a positive note whilst generating qualitative data to complement the CSI.

### **HOW CAN THE CSI BE ADMINISTERED?**

The CSI is administered using a mobile digital device. It is most powerful when combined with other forms of (administrative and qualitative) data collection. At this stage, the CSI is expected to be used by enumerators with a minimum level of training to respondents in a private, confidential and neutral setting. For the future we envisage the CSI also being delivered by trained youth and teachers, also applying group-interview techniques to facilitate rapid assessment.

### **HOW IS THE CSI BEING APPLIED IN BRAZIL?**

The CSI can be rapidly applied to (1) generate spatial and temporal baseline information on children's vulnerabilities, (2) evaluate interventions to see how they impact on the lives of children, and (3) produce advocacy materials to address the risks and needs of young people. Taking 10-15 minutes to complete, including informed consent, the CSI lends itself to large and repeat cross-sectional surveys. The Igarapé Institute is partnering with [Promundo](#) (Rio de Janeiro), [Shine-a-Light](#) and the Federal University of Pernambuco (Recife) and [NECA/UNICEF/Indica](#) (multiple cities). Until 2016, the CSI will be scaled up to 50 cities across Brazil. A "CSI toolkit" that contains survey tools and accompanying documentation will be available online. It is worth mentioning that the CSI will also be applied in the United States, through a partnership with [Cure Violence](#) in cities such as Chicago, New York and New Orleans.

### **WHERE CAN THE CSI BE USED?**

The CSI is designed to be used in poor and violence-prone communities. It was designed in Brazil but the intention is for it to be adapted and replicated in other settings, including elsewhere in Latin America, North America and Africa. It is a tool developed in the South but for Northern application. The CSI does not prescribe a standard definition of violence nor draw a distinction between public or private forms. Instead it relies on subjective notions of safety, security and well being, along with direct and indirect impacts of violence on children's everyday life. As a composite index it captures both real and perceived levels of insecurity among children and serves as a wider proxy of the extent of safety in a given setting.

### **HOW DOES THE CSI WORK?**

The CSI consists of age-specific mini-surveys that organize and visualize information, but also provide geo-location data. Trained enumerators will ask specific questions of care-givers, educators, and children. Owing to ethical factors, children will not be questioned about their own experiences of

violence<sup>2</sup>, and mainly positive statements will be employed. Information will then be presented visually as maps and figures in customizable dashboards to allow for an intuitive and interactive experience. Data will also be encrypted to ensure that it is safe-guarded at all times. The CSI does not necessarily produce generalizable data unless appropriate sampling is undertaken.

### **THE FUTURE OF THE CSI**

While initially a fieldworker led digital survey tool, we plan to develop a smartphone application on “news and views on violence against children” that incorporates the CSI survey. Such an app would enable users to receive notification and information on violence outbreaks and services, whilst simultaneously enable anonymous reporting by witnesses. We also envisage the CSI becoming owned and organized by communities themselves. Resulting data-sets and maps will be “real time” and dynamically change to reflect incoming information, and work on all platforms, web and mobile.

### **ETHICAL ISSUES**

A detailed ethical strategy, based on the the latest expert guidelines, will lay out the practical steps that must be taken to ensure:

- Protection: neither children nor adults must not come to any harm as a result of the research
- Informed consent: all respondents must understand what the research is for and given their consent to taking part
- Confidentiality: researchers, and anyone who handles research data, must keep the information confidential.

### **WHAT DOES THE CSI LOOK LIKE?**

The CSI has a “front-end” and a “back-end”. The front end consists of the survey presented in a console on a mobile device. As shown below, this will include specific statements that children agree or disagree with on a 3 point scale. The back-end consists of an online platform to present data in the form of a customizable and interactive “dashboard”, including graphs and geographic maps. As all data is geo-located, it can be presented accordingly using geo-thermal representation.

### **WHO DESIGNED THE CSI?**

The CSI was designed by the Igarapé Institute, in consultation with over two dozen experts in violence against children (VAC) from around the world. A

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<sup>2</sup> If direct questions about victimization is required by implementing partners, we recommend a module based on “things I’ve seen and heard” tool.



conceptual model was published in 2012 and the Igarapé Institute has undertaken field-tests in 2013 to test its viability. At its center is a shortlist of 20 indicators selected from hundreds of possible metrics. These are designed to capture the qualitative experience of insecurity, including perceptions, attitudes and physical impacts. The CSI was designed with stringent ethical standards in mind, so certain kinds of data are necessarily privileged over others.

## **CONTACTS**

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